



THE WAILING

A FILM BY NA HONG-JIN



Opens in UK Cinemas 25 November

Written and directed by **Na Hong-jin**
Starring **Hwang Jung-min, Chun Woo-hee,**
Kwak Do-won and **Kunimura Jun**

Running time: 156mins



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“A powerful blend of detective story, occult horror and Stephen King-esque small-town suspicion, this is superb”

★★★★

SciFiNow

★★★★

Empire

“You absolutely must add THE WAILING to your must-see list this year.”

Den of Geek

“This could well be regarded as one of the best films to emerge from Korea in recent years.”

Screen Daily

“A bone-chilling, thunderous descent into Hell” TwitchFilm “A gripping whodunnit”

Variety

“Deliciously entertaining”

The Playlist

“Exhilarating bleakness”

Slant Magazine

“A darkly unsettling story about evil is masterfully told”

The Hollywood Reporter

“After finishing THE YELLOW SEA [in 2010], all I did was prepare this film. I should have recognised my limits, but with this project I had encountered something truly fierce. I really wanted to make it.”
- Director Na Hong-jin

In this unbelievably tense supernatural thriller, a foreigner’s mysterious appearance in a quiet, rural village causes suspicion among the locals - suspicion which quickly turns to hysteria as the townspeople begin killing each other in brutal outbursts for seemingly no reason. As the investigating officer watches his daughter fall under the same savage spell, he agrees to consult a shaman for answers - unknowingly escalating the situation into something far more dangerous.

Over six years in the making, director Na Hong-jin’s meticulously crafted follow-up to the globally acclaimed **THE YELLOW SEA** and **THE CHASER** (his third to premiere at the Festival de Cannes) smashed box office records upon its debut in South Korea, where fans are already making return viewings to catch new clues and debate what’s sure to be the most talked-about ending of 2016



LOCATION IS EVERYTHING

*Obsessive location scouting resulted in a six-month shoot that crisscrossed the country, enabling **THE WAILING** to create its own utterly unique cinematic space.*

THE WAILING was made with a complete devotion to perfection, encompassing three years of screenplay writing and revision, six months of shooting, and a year of post-production work. In particular, the production team's devotion to on-location shooting was extraordinary.

Following the cramped alleyways and streets of Seoul shown in his first film **THE CHASER**, and the desolate backdrop of Yanbian in **THE YELLOW SEA**, director Na Hong-jin gave great attention to the spaces portrayed in **THE WAILING**, devoting himself to personally finding the perfect locations.

Of the film's total 121 shooting days, 97 were spent on location in various cities and towns around Korea including Hamyang, Cheolwon, Gokseong, Gurye, Suncheon, Jangseong, Haenam, Hwasun, Gochang, and Jinan. The extensive scouting took into account everything from the shape of houses to the form and curvature of trees. In particular, Jong-gu's house, which serves as the main stage of the film, was found at the end of an exhaustive search of traditional Korean homes across the country in order to find the exact layout and gate appropriate for the story.

The Stranger's hideout was refurbished from a deserted shack located on a mountain 400m above sea level. Scenes shot in the mountains with no road access, such as the 336m high cliffs at Seonunsan Mountain or the waterfall, required the crew to haul heavy production equipment, cameras and cranes along narrow mountain paths back and forth for several days on end.

All this resulted in a cinematic space filled with vivid mise-en-scène that fully extends the characters and situations of the film in a way that a studio could never provide.

FIERCE NATURALISM

*Allowing reality to form the visuals and spectacle of **THE WAILING***

The effort to impart an utter reality to the high quality visuals in **THE WAILING** began with waiting for the appropriate time and weather for the situations in the film. Director Na was committed to finding the appropriate tone and atmosphere for the mysterious and often terrifying events that take place in the story.

As opposed to the tall skyline of a city, the countryside setting of **THE WAILING** with its wide mountain ridges made it inevitable that natural light would fill the screen, so Director Na waited for actual clouds, mist and rain in order for the sky to be in the perfect condition for each scene and create the dim, but natural look, needed for the shoot. For example, the chase scene featuring Jong-gu's companions on the mountain road was all shot with actual heavy rain, taking weeks to finish.

The time of day was another factor that was beyond compromise. To take advantage of the special natural lighting at magic hour, the crew scheduled shooting during a brief window of time at dawn, sometimes shooting only a cut or two each day and taking several days to finish a particular scene.

Furthermore, in order to impart the greatest degree of naturalism to the art direction and props, the crew prepared as many real objects as possible and limited their dependence on CGI and post-production work.

The withered snapdragon flowers that form the shape of skulls were prepared by drying real flowers for several months before the shoot and choosing those that most closely resembled skulls. The shamanic ritual performed by Il-gwang was staged by combining objects and forms used in various actual rituals.

AN ALL-STAR TEAM

An unprecedented mobilization of talent to achieve a singular vision

An unrivalled crew in terms of reputation and skill gathered to stretch themselves in new ways to realize **THE WAILING**.

In his first collaboration with Na Hong-jin, the multiple award-winning Director of Photography Hong Kyung-pyo, renowned for his refined but dynamic camera work in films like *Snowpiercer*, *Haemoo* and *Mother*, brought a breathtaking tension and explosive energy to **THE WAILING**'s visuals.

Hong made selective use of a special anamorphic lens and different cameras in order to create changes in the depiction of certain spaces. In scenes like the shamanic ritual, which was shot in a 15-minute long take using 6 different cameras, this results in a highly original look that keeps that audience off-balance right alongside the characters.

Production Designer Lee Hwo-kyung, behind the intense but realistic production design of *The Yellow Sea*, achieved in **THE WAILING** something approaching literary realism. Costume Designer Chae Kyung-hwa (*The Yellow Sea*, *The Terror Live*, *The Divine Move*, *Tazza - The Hidden Card*) instilled a personality to the everyday clothes worn by Jong-gu and the villagers, as well as the clothing worn by Il-gwang that shatters the preconceptions about what a shaman would dress like.

Editor Kim Sun-min (*Memories of Murder*, *The Host*, *The Chaser*, *The Yellow Sea*), in contrast to director Na's previous films, allows the tension in **THE WAILING** to build at a deliberate pace, but withholds

resolution for the audience for longer and longer stretches as the film progresses- making for a different kind of thriller.

Finally, the music composed by Jang Young-gyu and Dalpala (*Assassination*, *The Thieves*), which combines together ambient noises, strings, and various natural sounds for rhythm, imparts a simple but deeply resonant sense of tension to the film.

With this all-star crew contributing their talents in cinematography, art, costumes, editing and music, **THE WAILING** boasts a precise craftsmanship designed to overwhelm the screen without the audience knowing it's happening until they're in the middle of it. Just like the characters who find themselves in an escalating situation, so too does the audience.

ABOUT THE FILM MAKERS

NA HONG-JIN (DIRECTOR & WRITER)

Na Hong-jin has gained international recognition with his feature film debut *The Chaser* (2008) and follow up *The Yellow Sea* (2010). He realized his unique perspective and fully fleshed out the genre of "Korean noir" through his distinct visual style and bold touch.

Relentless and sorrowful, **THE WAILING** explores, in depth, humans who are instinctively roused and corrupted by an unknown being who can neither be defined as real nor imaginary, good nor evil.

Filmography

THE WAILING (2016)

69th Cannes Film Festival - Out of Competition

The Yellow Sea (2010)

64th Cannes Film Festival - Un Certain Regard 17th LA Film Fest - The Beyond

28th Filmfest München - Focus Far East

15th Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival - Best Director 60th Melbourne International Film Festival - Accent on Asia

7th Fantastic Fest - Official Selection

44th SITGES - International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia - Official Fantastic - Best Direction Award

The Chaser (2008)

61st Cannes Film Festival - Out of competition (Midnight Projections)

41st SITGES - International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia - Casa Àsia-Orient Express - Casa Àsia Award 12th Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival - Screen International Critics' Choice

31st Golden Film Festival - Best New Director

29th Oporto International Film Festival - Fantasporto - Orient Express - Special Jury Award 11th Deauville Asian Film Festival - Action Asia - Best Action Asia Film

27th Brussels International Festival of Fantastic Film - Thriller Competition - The Prize of the Best

CAST

KWAK DO-WON (JONG-GU)

A police officer in a quiet and peaceful rural village that is suddenly jolted by violent, mysterious murders.

Selected Filmography

2013 *The Attorney* (dir. Yang Woo Seok)
- 34th Korean Association of Film Critics Awards - Best Supporting Actor
2012 *The Berlin File* (dir. Ryoo Seung Wan)
2011 *Nameless Gangster* (dir. Yoon Jong Bin)
2010 *The Yellow Sea* (dir. Na Hong Jin)

HWANG JUNG-MIN (IL-GWANG)

A traditional shaman who performs a ritual for sick Hyo-jin, Jong-Gu's daughter.

Although Jong-gu is unsure whether he is a crackpot or a savior, he has no choice but to rely on the shaman for the sake of his daughter.

Selected Filmography

2015 *Veteran* (dir. Ryoo Seung Wan)
2014 *Ode to My Father* (dir. JK Youn)
2012 *New World* (dir. Park Hoon Jung)
- 34th Blue Dragon Film Awards - Best Leading Actor
2010 *The Unjust* (dir. Ryoo Seung Wan)
- 15th Fantasia International Film Festival - Best Actor Award

KUNIMURA JUN (THE STRANGER)

The Japanese stranger who shows up in the village just as the murders start. He's the target of suspicion and rumours, because nobody can explain just where he came from.

Selected Filmography

2013 *Like Father, Like Son* (dir. Kore-eda Hirokazu)
2010 *Outrage* (dir. Kitano Takeshi)
2004 *Kill Bill: Vol. 2* (dir. Quentin Tarantino)
2003 *Kill Bill: Vol. 1* (dir. Quentin Tarantino)

CHUN WOO-HEE (ANONYMOUS WOMAN)

A mysterious woman who appears to Jong-gu, claiming to have witnessed everything.

Selected Filmography

2013 *Han Gong-ju* (dir. Lee Su Jin)
- 51st Paeksang Arts Awards - Film Awards - Best New Actress
- 35th Blue Dragon Film Awards - Best Leading Actress
2011 *Sunny* (dir. Kang Hyoung Chul)

CREW

Written and Directed by
Na Hong Jin

Starring
Jong-Gu - Kwak Do Won
Il-Gwang - Hwang Jung Min
The Stranger - Kunitamura Jun
Anonymous Woman - Chun Woo Hee

Produced by
Suh Dong Hyun, Kim Ho Sung

Executive Producers
Robert Friedland, John Penotti

Director of Photography
Hong Kyung Pyo

Production Designer
Lee Hwo Kyung

Production Sound Mixer
Kim Sin Yong (K.P.A)

Costume Designer
Chae Kyung Hwa

Makeup & Hair
Kim Seo Young

Special Effects
Kim Kwang Soo (Extreme.FX)

Special Makeup by Hwang Hyo Kyun, Kwak Tae Yong (Cell)

Editor
Kim Sun Min

Music Composers
Jang Young Gyu, Dalpalan Sound Supervisor Park Yong Ki (Studio K)